

Good Afternoon Members of the Human Services Subcommittee:

My name is Keisha Williams and I am here before to ask you to **maintain funding for the Commission on Children and the Parent Trust Fund** because of the important role of parent leadership training in our state.

- Parent Leadership Programs have played a critical role in my life for over 2 years.
- I am an Alumnus of Parent Leadership Training Institute, and Parents Supporting Educational Excellence – both family civics initiatives of the Commission on Children. I am also the Site Coordinator of Middlesex County Parent Leadership Training Institute which I something I can proudly declare that this would not have been possible without the skills I have acquired in Parent Leadership Programs.
- My involvement in these programs has transformed me in a way that I would never have imagined. As a shy, introverted individual, in the past I would never have sought the attention of others. Until now. While I can still be classified as reserved, Parent Leadership programs have helped me affirm my core beliefs and values so that I can turn nervous energy, into positive energy so that my message shines.
- Today, I help my fellow parent leaders do just as hundreds before us have done, reassess our core beliefs and commitment to Connecticut's Children and families.
- Parent Leadership Training Institute (PLTI), Parents Supporting Educational Excellence (PSEE) and People Empowering People (PEP) are three programs that our Children and our communities should not go without.
- Children perform better in school when a Parent or Guardian is informed and involved. PLTI, PSEE and PEP teach Parents how to navigate school systems, effectively communicate problems,

offer solutions and ultimately increase the potential of success of their children.

- Teaching a Parent how to communicate, research and positively advocate on behalf of their families is a service that will repay itself in rewards for years to come. Children leaders mature into Adult leaders and Parent Leadership programs ensure that and I hope this is a comfort that I can say is here to stay.
- I hope this is here to stay because as an individual with no children, this is a program for every one regardless of status. Parent Leadership programs assisted me in my struggle to manage my passion while still achieving my desires which is the successful future of not just my eventual children but our children.
- In trying times, family fortification and self sufficiency is needed the most, please do not take them away.

## **In Sum**

I am better person than I was two years ago. I have always thought of others but now I go out of my way to help them, assist them because PLTI has done the same for me. As an Alumni of PLTI and PSEE I have witnessed the life changing process first hand. I have seen Parent leaders amongst me rise to all new heights, and our children are better off because of the funding received by the Parent Trust, Children's Trust and the leverage these sources of funding provides. Thanks to these programs and funding streams, I can say that I now have an undying determination to improve the outcomes for our children in Connecticut and the United States of America. I thank you for your time and attention to this most important matter, our families.